

BIN LADEN/IBN KHATTAB THREAT REPORTING

April [redacted], 2001

Director Freeh:

[redacted] This note is to advise you of recent threat reporting deemed significant and urgent by the United States Intelligence Community.

[redacted]

The U.S. Government has received information indicating that serious operational planning has been underway since late 2000, with an intended culmination in late Spring 2001. These plans are being undertaken by Sunni extremists with links to Ibn al Khattab, an extremist leader in Chechnya, and to Usama Bin Laden. There are several planning channels, some with connections to Afghanistan, all within a large shared mujahideen recruitment network. It is not known whether there are several different parallel plans or whether all activity centers on one major operation, since all the players are heavily intertwined.

The spark which appears to have ignited interest in pursuing a terrorist operation was the renewal of the Palestinian intifada in September 2000. In October, Ibn Khattab issued his strongest statement to date in favor of the Palestinian jihad. He then devised a plan to train mujahideen. In late 2000, a UBL lieutenant and mujahideen facilitator had also turned his attention to the Palestinian cause and he was in charge of preparations for operational activity. He sought financiers for the operation, which was close to completion. Additionally, another mujahideen facilitator with ties to the UBL lieutenant was stepping up his activity in March and also was pursuing funds to expedite matters because something was going to happen.

[redacted]

1 - Mr. Pickard
1 - Mr. Bucknam
1 - Mr. Watson
1 - Mr. Turchie
LNM:lm (8)

1 - Mr. Rolinec
1 - Mr. Jennings
1 - Ms. Stafford
1 - Mr. Middleton

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[REDACTED]

Multiple sources also suggest that UBL's organization is planning a terrorist attack against US interests [REDACTED]. The reporting involves movement of terrorists from [REDACTED] following training there, and the smuggling of explosives and arms into [REDACTED] for use against US and/or Western targets [REDACTED].

ITOS Response

[REDACTED] The Usama Bin Laden Unit is preparing an EC for all field offices and Legats, advising of the heightened threat environment. Field offices will be requested to utilize all resources, including electronic databases and human sources, for supplemental information to be reported immediately to FBIHQ. Those offices with UBL FISAs will be asked to conduct a review of recent technical cuts in light of the threat information. In addition, [REDACTED] is being provided detailed information on [REDACTED] current operational activities, to assist possible investigation.

[REDACTED] You shall be kept apprised of any further developments.

Dale Watson